



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

News Release

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Executive Gardner Announces Agricultural Initiatives

FREDERICK, MD – County Executive Jan Gardner announced initiatives to support the long-term economic viability of agriculture in Frederick County. A survey of farmers and the agriculture-based industry will be launched today through April 11 and will be used to develop proposals and direct legislation that will best support local farmers. The results will be released and form the basis for a special Agriculture Business Viability Roundtable on Earth Day – Monday, April 22. The roundtable is open to the public and will take place at 6:30 p.m. in Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick.

“One of my priorities is to ensure we leave a legacy of agriculture for future generations,” commented Executive Gardner. “That means we must preserve our best, most productive farms, and help to keep agriculture an economically viable industry. I invite everyone in the farming community to participate in the survey and attend our important roundtable discussion.”

Frederick County is a national and state leader when it comes to being stewards of its rich farmlands, with more than 180,000 acres and over 1,300 farms. Agriculture directly accounts for more than \$150 million in sales each year and the industry generates an economic impact of nearly \$1.5 billion. The county boasts more USDA-certified organic farms than any other county in Maryland.

There are more large and small farms in the region than there were 20 years ago, and agritourism and craft beverage enterprises that use local products are flourishing. Since 2015, the county has preserved more than 65,000 acres of farmland. However, a serious challenge to the industry is that the dairy business has declined over the past several decades.

The survey will be mailed and e-mailed to the county’s agricultural community. Questions on the survey relate to issues such as land preservation, hurdles to value-added products or land uses, interest in shared resources such as cold storage or processing facilities, and what the community identifies as the biggest challenges they face.

For more information or to be included in the survey, contact Business Development Specialist Katie Albaugh Stevens, Office of Economic Development, at 301-600-3037 or via e-mail at kstevens1@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

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